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FM AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
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INFO RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 0001
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA IMMEDIATE 0008
RUEHRG/AMCONSUL RECIFE IMMEDIATE 0004
RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO IMMEDIATE
RUEHRI/AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 RIO DE JANEIRO 000363

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2019/11/09

TAGS: PREL MARR CASC UNSC IR BR

SUBJECT: A/S SHANNON MEETS WITH MRE POLITICAL UNDERSECRETARY GENERAL FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS

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CLASSIFIED BY: Lisa Kubiske, Charge d'Affaires; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

SUMMARY

¶1. (SBU) On October 22, 2009, WHA Assistant Secretary Tom Shannon met with Ambassador Vera Machado, Under-Secretary General for Political Affairs from the Ministry of External Relations (MRE) in Salvador, Bahia, on the margins of the Third Steering Group Meeting for the Joint Action Plan to Eliminate Racial Discrimination (reftel). Charge d'Affaires, WHA/BSC Office Director, and Rio Pol/Econoff (notetaker) also attended the meeting. The MRE's Director for United Nations Division Gilda Motta Santos Neves, Director for U.S., Canadian, and Inter-American Affairs Department Carlos Abreu, and the Brazilian Embassy Chief of Staff to the Ambassador in Washington Alexandre Ghisleni accompanied Machado.

¶2. (C) Machado praised plans for a U.S.-Brazil high-level dialogue, and suggested adding the topic of gender. She said the U.S.-Brazil Defense Cooperation Agreement was in the "final" stages of analysis in Brasilia. A/S Shannon raised the Sean Goldman custody case in the context of Brazil's Hague Convention obligations. UN Division Head Gilda Motta Santos called Brazil's upcoming term as an elected member of the Security Council (UNSC) "special," and suggested regular, strategic consultations with the United States on UNSC issues. A/S Shannon strongly urged Machado to exercise the MRE's influence with Iran to promote democracy and human rights, to which she agreed, stating the MRE would ask Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to stay the executions of hundreds of democracy protesters. End Summary.

U.S.-BRAZIL DIALOGUE

¶3. (C) Machado praised the plans for a high-level Dialogue and suggested adding the topic of gender, stating, "It would send a good signal to Secretary Clinton." On overall dialogue issues, Abreu said MRE faced a challenge on mechanisms that were not State/MRE-led. He suggested creating mechanisms at the ministerial level and then transferring leadership to the presidential level. According to Abreu, dialogue mechanisms not under MRE control "don't work well." He criticized other ministries for a "lack of institutional memory," and suggested the GoB could improve this by emulating the existing bilateral Economic Policy Dialogue (EPD), which incorporates effective recording of minutes.

BRAZIL'S NEW AMBASSADOR TO UNITED STATES

¶4. (C) With the arrival of a Mauro Vieira, the new Brazilian Ambassador to the United States, Machado said the MRE was in a process of "change." She stated the MRE was producing a paper with ideas on possible new areas of bilateral engagement. With Vieira in Washington, Machado said, there will be "lots of advances." Machado expressed concern about a possible delay of Ambassador Vieira's confirmation in the Brazilian Senate. While explaining a window of time currently exists to push through the confirmation, she said such a window would likely close by mid-December when the Brazilians break for the holidays.

DEFENSE COOPERATION AGREEMENT

¶5. (C) According to Machado, the U.S.-Brazil Defense Cooperation Agreement was in the "final" stages of analysis in Brasilia, and the Ministry of Defense (MOD) was "very favorable" towards it. Abreu said the agreement was similar to other bilateral defense agreements Brazil had entered into, citing Namibia as an example. He claimed these similarities helped to make the Brazilian inter-ministerial review process easier. (Note: Embassy was subsequently informed that FM Amorim has provided MRE approval of the DCA to the MOD. End note.)

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SEAN GOLDMAN CASE

¶6. (C) A/S Shannon raised the Sean Goldman custody case in the context of Brazil's Hague Convention obligations, urging the MRE to help return Goldman to his father's custody. Ghisleni suggested that U.S. Members of Congress should avoid "inflammatory speech" in a Congressional hearing on child abductions scheduled for early November. According to Ghisleni, harshly-worded language could be a potentially negative influence on a court proceeding in Rio de Janeiro, to take place shortly following the hearing.

BRAZIL'S ELECTED MEMBER ROLE IN THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL

¶7. (C) UN Division Head Santos called Brazil's upcoming term as an elected member of the UN Security Council "special," explaining that many countries were very interested to see how Brazil would use its seat. "Although this is our 10th time on the Council, there is a sense that this time is different," she said. According to Santos, Brazil now needs more "contacts" on UNSC issues, and she suggested regular "strategic" consultations, as opposed to an "as needed basis," between MRE and State. "We have a lot to learn from you," she said. Machado also stressed the need for closer coordination with the United States in the UN, and mentioned human rights as a specific area.

IRAN

¶8. (C) A/S Shannon strongly urged Machado to exercise the MRE's influence with Iran to promote democracy and human rights. He encouraged Brazil to use its voice with President Ahmadinejad to stay the executions of the hundreds of protesters arrested after the presidential elections last June. Machado agreed with A/S Shannon's concern and said the MRE would raise the issue with the

Iranians.